

with Colombia, Panama, and South Korea. We've shown that this Chamber has the ability to work together.

So, yes, we can't wait. We can't wait until the end of the election for the President to come up with a real plan and to work with Republicans. We want to stand together. I get it. An election is coming up next November. We all understand that. You're going to hear about it on television. But let's not miss the next 14 months. Let's not miss this opportunity to really stand up and govern and get the American people back to work.

RETAINING AND STRENGTHENING THE TRANSPORTATION ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Today's Washington Post has an interesting article about the possibility that Congress will jettison the Transportation Enhancement funding. Best known for providing resources for bike and pedestrian activities, it also opens the door to a wide range of important benefits. Sadly, the language in the article betrays a lack of understanding on the part of those who would eliminate these important programs.

For instance, they single out somehow that this was forcing the creation of wildlife corridors—turtle tunnels, passages that don't just comply with our environmental responsibilities. These aren't something to trivialize. More Americans die in collisions with moose, with deer—or, for that matter, from swerving to avoid a turtle in the roadway—than die on our airplanes and buses in a given year. These are not trivial issues. These are areas that give choices to be able to deal with meaningful transportation problems.

Right now, as I speak, there are millions of Americans stuck in traffic—burning fuel, wasting time, raising their blood pressure. The investment in complete transportation systems, which includes bike and pedestrian activities, means that there are hundreds of thousands of cars that aren't in front of these people in the roadway because they're able to walk or bike to work, and they're not fighting these commuters for a parking space.

These programs are about safety. In the communities that enhance bike and pedestrian activity, everyone is safer. Look at the numbers in New York City or in my hometown of Portland, Oregon. It isn't just the pedestrian and the cyclist who are safer, but it's also the individual motorist. Traffic accident rates for everybody have declined.

It gives people transportation choices. More people can let their children walk or bike to school safely on their own because of the Safe Routes to School program rather than producing another bulge in the early morning

commute. Choice also means healthier communities and the people who live in them. It's easier to get gentle exercise, cleaner air, less energy wasted.

The costs associated with pollution and obesity are astronomical. This gives values to families. Communities that have balanced transportation programs actually spend less on transportation. The figures for my hometown of Portland, Oregon, show that the average family saves \$2,500 a year not being stuck in traffic, in a commuting mess—money that they can spend on health care or books, restaurants or housing.

It's not just pedestrians and cyclists who would be shortchanged if we jettison these programs. The same adjustments that make it safer to walk or bike also have a profound impact on people who rely on walkers, baby strollers, motorized scooters. These enhancements have enhanced the community for the elderly, the disabled, and the young.

We also, frankly, have a current debate that shows exactly why we need a national policy. It's easy for people to get confused or misled. Nobody is forced to build a specific project. It forces State transportation officials to work harder and think differently, but it gives people more choices, more value, better health, stronger communities. It means that all our communities are more livable and that our families are safer, healthier, and more economically secure.

The 20-year legacy of the Transportation Enhancement program is strong. That's why they are the most requested transportation projects that Congress has entertained for the last 20 years. I do hope that we debate it fully and fairly. In the end, if we do, I am confident we will retain these important programs, and if anything, we will strengthen them.

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HONORING SPRINGFIELD LITERACY CENTER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MEEHAN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the Springfield Literacy Center, which is an innovative district-wide initiative in Springfield Township, Delaware County School System in the Seventh District of Pennsylvania, which I have the privilege to represent.

Like so many of my colleagues, when we have our district work week, it gives us the chance to go back and really spend some quality time engaging with a number of the groups. While the principal focus of my work weeks is to go back and work on the issue of jobs and the creation of opportunities, particularly with small businesses, one of the issues that many of them will talk to me about is the unpreparedness of many of our graduates to be able to

take on the jobs, particularly the jobs in the expanding global economy which we face.

One of the issues is the ability to do fundamental things. I visited this literacy center last week because it's setting the standard for educational excellence in the 21st century. It's a community-wide focus on the issue of the fundamental of reading, and it started with the superintendent on down and every teacher in the school district focused on having the ability for every child being able to read.

This particular literacy center brings their entire second grade class from the full district together to learn. While it's an architecturally impressive area which supports the learning concept, it's really the individualized attention that's given to each and every student, identifying where they are in the process and, if necessary, going down and even to an individual basis to help them stay current with their class.

The literacy center is the foundation of Springfield Township's literacy first initiative, which aims to ensure that every child leaves elementary school reading at grade level. Let me repeat that: every child leaves elementary school reading at grade level. The center's teachers accomplish this by designing an individual literacy curriculum designed for each student. Lessons often use creative techniques, and the settings are tailored to individual students' learning styles. The key thing here is that students do not fall behind and they are prepared as they move into later education to stay with the rest of their class.

With these innovative techniques and through the hard work of the literacy center's teachers, students and families after only 5 years of operation, 99 percent of its students were reading at grade level. Let me repeat that again: 99 percent of its students were reading at grade level.

Mr. Speaker, I commend the Springfield Literacy Center and its staff for all that they do in making a difference in the lives of their students and their communities. But I suggest to you that this is the kind of model that we should be replicating so that all American students will be prepared to have the fundamental of reading be a central part of their ability to be prepared to compete in the global economy.

BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ) for 5 minutes.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor October as National Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

For nearly 30 years, the month of October has brought a sea of pink ribbons to our shopping centers, sports games and lapels as we commemorate National Breast Cancer Awareness Month.